of the river and to improve the water quality to bathing standards. To achieve the same, 261 schemes for interception and diversion, sewage treatment, low cost sanitation, electric crematoria, river front facilities and others were taken up. It was targeted to intercept, divert and treat 873 mld waste water out of an estimated 1340 mld waste water being generated from 25 class I towns along Ganga. 191 schemes have been completed so far which has resulted in interception and diversion of 485 mld of waste water. Also 210 mld out of 260 mld of industrial waste generated by 68 gross polluting units is being treated as a result of enforcement of legal measures. In places where the interception and diversion schemes have been completed or industrial effluents treated, there is a marked improvement in the water quality in terms of dissolved oxygen and bie-chemical oxygen demand.

(d) It is proposed to expedite the completion of the remaining schemes at the earliest.

Special Enironmental Courts

4389. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the proposal for setting up of special environmental courts is pending for a long time and if so, since when;

(b) the reasons for delay in setting up of these courts; and

(c) by when these courts are likely to be started functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) A proposal to set up a National Environment Tribunal was initiated in 1990 to provide strict liability for damages arising out of any accident involving hazardous substances and also to provide for compensation and interim relief to the affected persons. The proposal is under the consideration of Government.

"RIO declaration on role of women"

4390. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Rio Declartaion has stressed a vital role to be played by women in environmental management and sustainable development; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Principle 20 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development reads as follows:—

"Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development".

(b) The Government of India fully endorses the above mentioned principle. The need to bring women into the mainstream of development has been a national concern since Independence. A separate Department of Women and Child Welfare has been established already. The National Perspective Plan for Women (1988-2000) provides the directions for all round development of women. The strategy in the Eighth Five Year Plan is to ensure that the benefits of development from different sectors do not by pass women and special programmes are implemented for this purpose, particularly in regard to education, health & nutrition, child development, employment and improving the environment and quality of life of women in general.

New method to increase forest cover

4391. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item which appeared in 'The Observer' dated 4th August, 92 captioned "New Method to increase forest cover":

(b) if so, whether this 'biological method' has been used anywhere and whether positive results have been achieved; and

(c) if so, what are the areas, and States where Government is going to start the new method for increasing fresh forest cover?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) It reiterates plantation of salt tolerant tree species in saline soil. Biological method including soils amendments is in progress in such soils of Uttar Pradesh with positive results More details of the new biological method are being ascertained

Ban on industrial activities in Aravali range

4392. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry has requested Government to review its decision imposing a blanket ban on industrial activity in the Aravali range;

(b) whether such a step would have an impact on the overall growth and development of the districts nearby Aravali range; and

(c) if so, the further reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) While a notification had been issued on 7th May, 1992 for restricting certain activities in specified area of Aravali Range which are causing environmental degradation in the region, there has been no decision imposing a blanket ban on industrial activities as presumed by the PHD Chamber of Commerce while making a request for a review.

Setting up of Indian Institute of Forest Management

4393. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what was the objective in setting up the Indian Institute of Forest Management, the Environmental Protection and Coordination Organisation and the Disaster Management Institute;

(b) whether Government have made any review of the working of these organisations to know as to how far the objectives for which these were set up have been achieved;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what steps are contemplated by Government in case their performance has been found to be unsatisfactory and below expectations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) The objectives of the Institutes are set out in Statement (*See* below)

(b) to (d) As far as IIFM, Bhopal is concerned, its working is reviewed by the Board of Governors and the Society of IIFM in their meetings. The institution has had some problems due to absence of a regular Director. However, that difficulty has been overcome and strengthening of the faculty, widening the coverage and content of forestry management programmes and further building up of the infrastructure are in hand.

Review of the functioning of the ENVIS centre at EPCO is being undertaken by the ministry from time to time since its inception and the performance has been found to be satisfactory.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India do not have direct control over the working of the Disaster Management Institute, Bhopal.